

We Need Water But We Want Coca-Cola

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In The Name of Allah, The Most Merciful, The Bestower Of Mercy

This is the problem with desire. Our natural desire to live well and enjoy life is co-opted by the consumer system and turned into something enslaving. If we could just extinguish consumer desires and stop shopping, we would get a lot closer to every day. Simply because we would not have to do so much work.

The key is not to renounce all pleasures but to be a master of them. When it comes to pleasure, we seem to oscillate between bingeing and abstention. Is it possible that somehow we are encouraged to binge and abstain because that does the double-job of keeping cash flowing through the system and keeping us docile through self-adulation and guilt.

It is important to distinguish between the physical pleasures provided by drink and food and the promise of pleasure produced by the marketing of mass produced objects.

We desire things. We are attached to things. We believe that things will make us better and this desire produces a restless craving, which leads us into the world and schemes for betterment but of course, things have a built-in disappointment factor. Think back to the last time you bought a "thing." Did it live-up to the expectation that had been created by its expensive TV advertising campaign?

The fact that things are disappointing leads us not to abandon things, as it should, but to buy more things in the hope that the new and improved thing will not disappoint like the previous thing.

This is how capitalism works through a constant stream of disappointments, which encourages the spending of more and more money. The statement of Allah:

"And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment. " (57:20)

"O mankind! Be afraid of your Lord (by keeping your duty and staying away from the prohibited), and fear a Day when no father can avail aught for his son, nor a son avail aught for his father. Verily, the promise of Allah is true: let not then this (worldly) present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allah. Verily Allah, with Him (Alone) is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware." (31:33-34)